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Leuenberger

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- [54] **BLOOD PACK LABELS AND THE LIKE**
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[52] U.S. Cl. **604/403; 283/117; 283/81; 604/408**
[58] Field of Search **283/81; 604/189, 403, 604/404, 405, 408**

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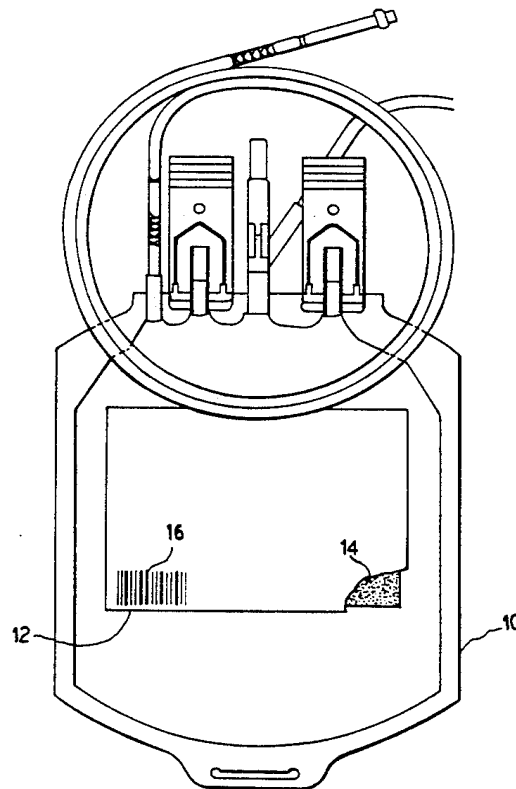
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ABSTRACT

A label for a blood pack comprising a microporous plastic film including a matrix of interconnected pores for allowing gas to flow into and out of the blood pack through a labeled area. The pores allow ink to be absorbed at least on an outer surface of the label allowing the label to be printed and/or written on. The labels of the present invention have breathability with respect to gas that is similar to paper. However, the label is more durable than a paper label in that it can tolerate moisture, abrasion, temperature extremes, dimensional changes, and the like. Accordingly, the labels do not crack or wrinkle as easily as paper labels.

4 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

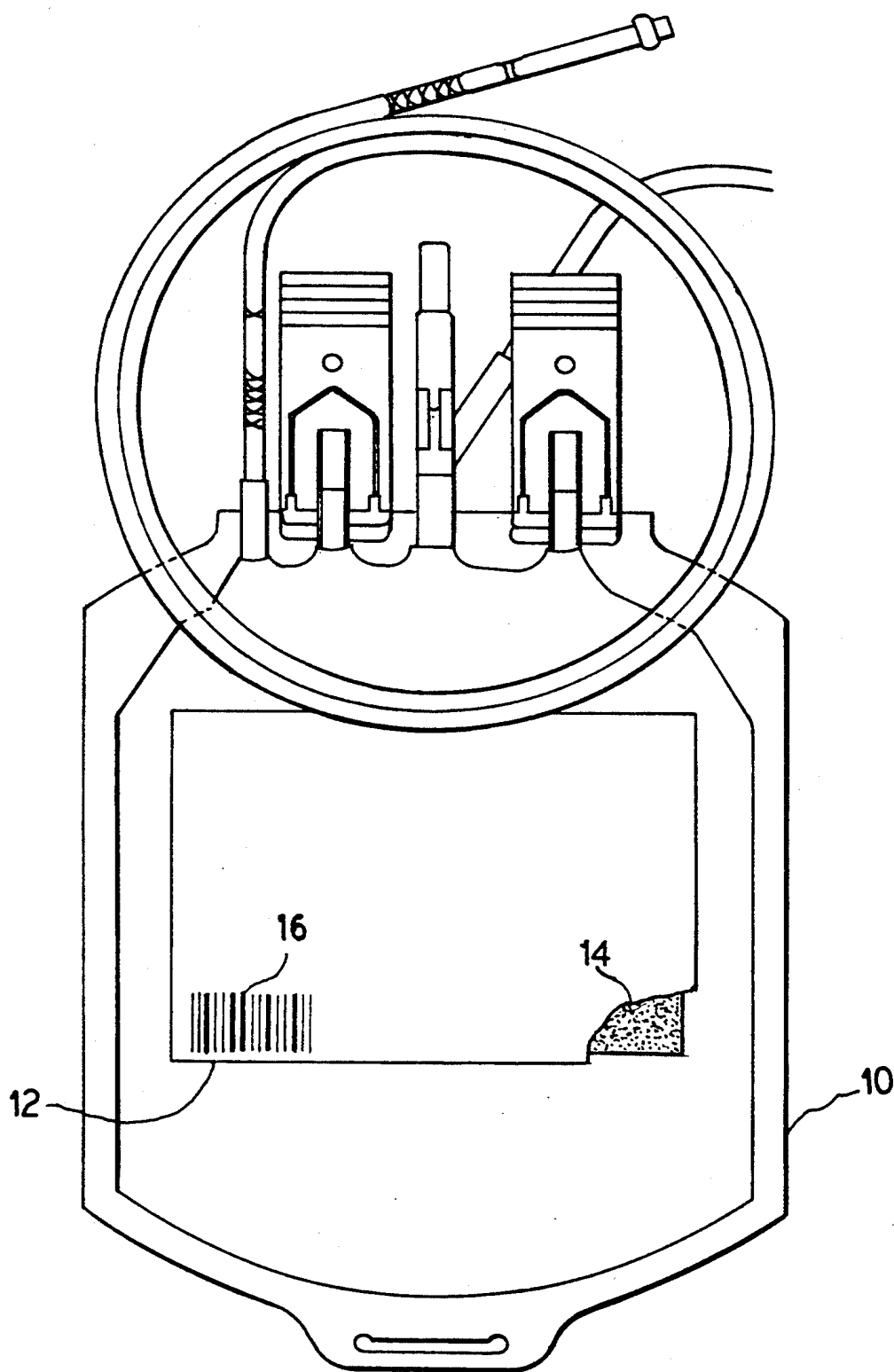


FIG. 1

FIG. 2a

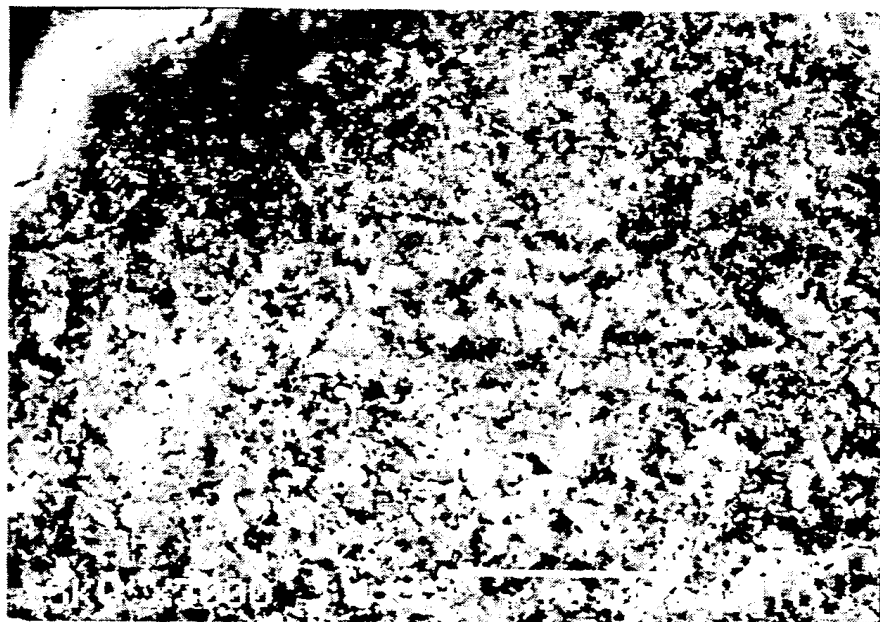


FIG. 2b



FIG. 3a

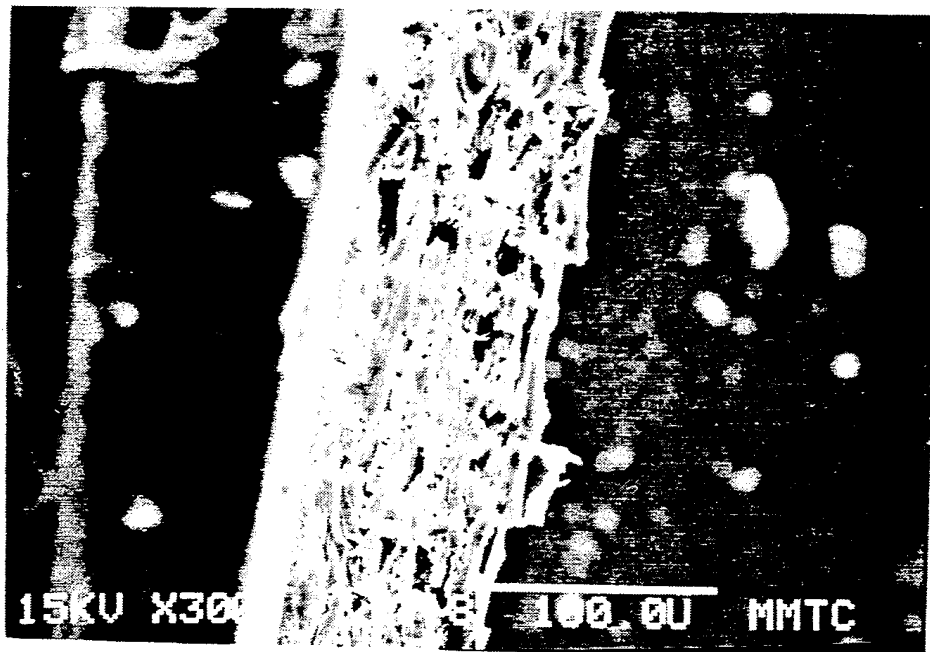


FIG. 3b

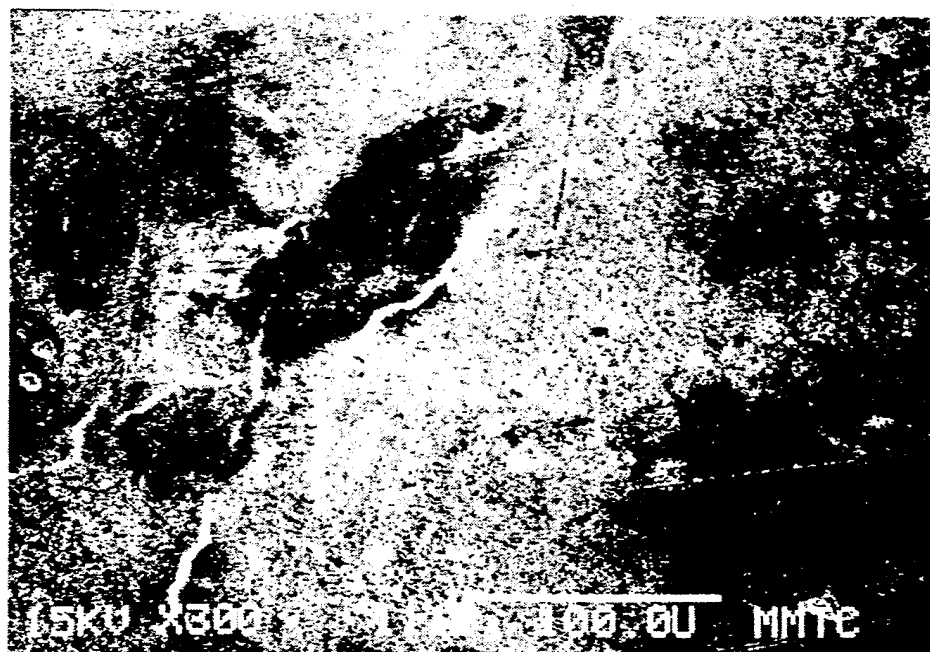


FIG. 4a

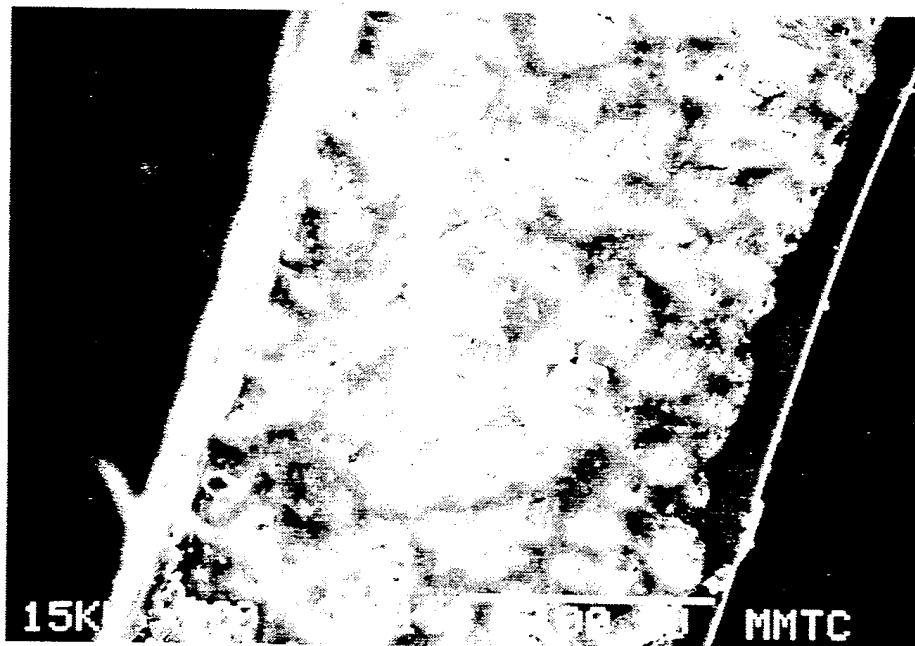


FIG. 4b

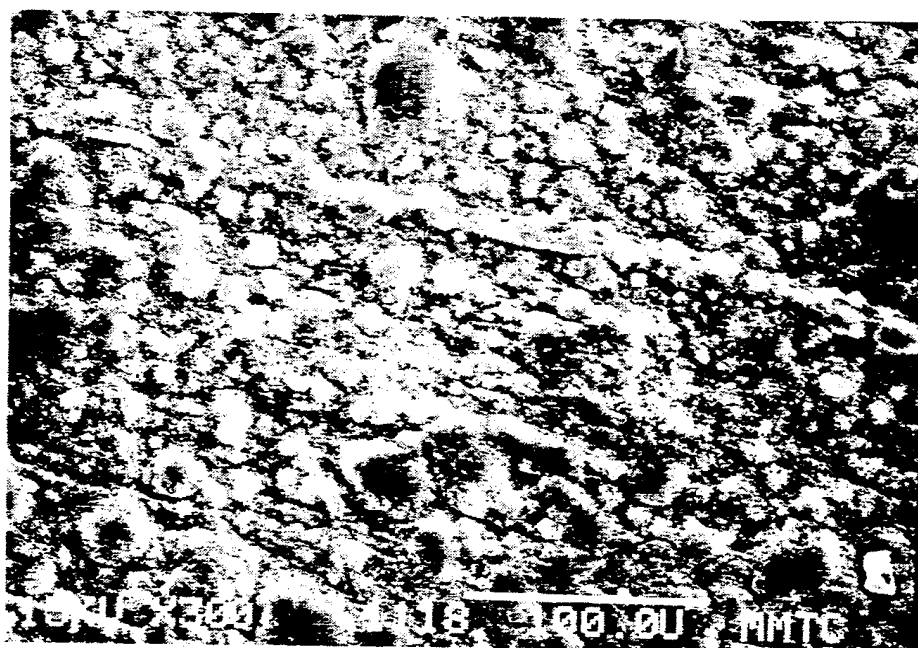
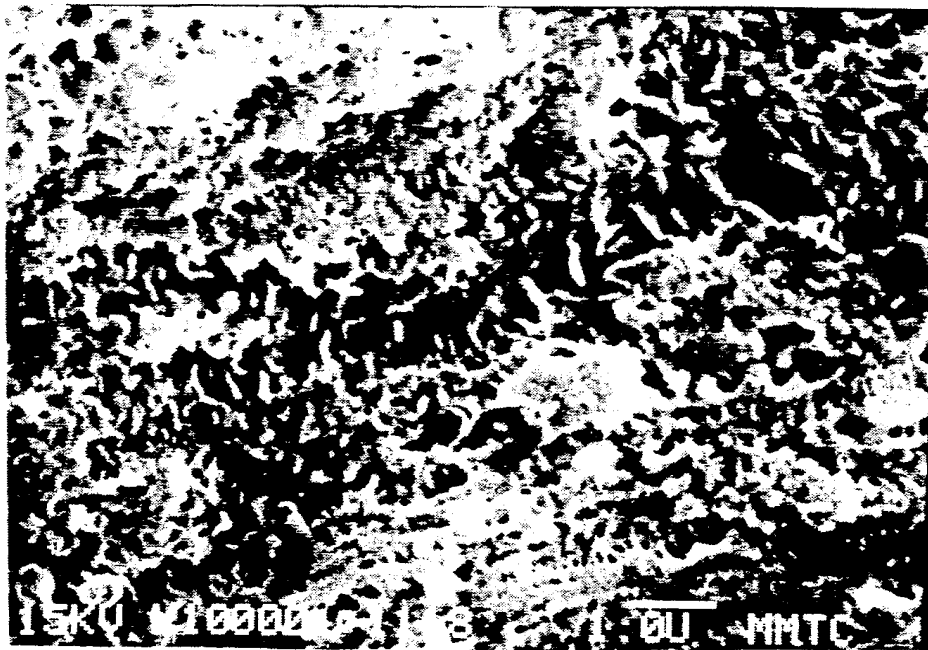


FIG. 5



BLOOD PACK LABELS AND THE LIKE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to blood packs generally. More specifically, the present invention relates to labels for blood packs.

It is known to house blood components in flexible plastic containers. These containers referred to as either blood packs or blood bags can be used to receive a blood component, process the blood component, store the blood component, and assist in infusing the blood component into a recipient. Of course, it is necessary to provide some means for identifying certain information on the blood pack, e.g., the type of storage solution, anticoagulant, or blood component, the collection date, manufacturer's product code and lot number, etc.

To this end, it is known to provide labels for blood packs. Typically, these labels have heretofore comprised a paper substrate that is secured to the container. These paper labels provide many characteristics that are necessary and/or desirable for a blood pack label.

Blood packs must provide a container that allows gas transmission through the container in order to maintain the viability of the cells to be housed therein. In this regard, it is necessary that the bag allow carbon dioxide to flow out of the blood pack and oxygen to flow therein. Paper provides a substrate that allows for a flow of gas through the labeled area of the blood pack; a paper label does not decrease the effective area of the bag that allows gas transmission beyond acceptable limits.

Paper also provides a surface that can be written or printed on. Thus, a paper label provides a substrate that allows one to easily indicate necessary information on the blood pack. In this regard, the label typically will receive printed as well as handwritten information. It is also known to use bar codes on such labels.

Paper, however, does exhibit certain disadvantages when used as a label for a blood pack. Paper labels are not very durable to moisture, abrasion, temperature extreme, and are not elastic to allow for dimensional changes that occur to the blood pack. It is known to process the blood components stored within the blood packs by centrifuging the bag in addition to other processes. During such processes the labels can become wet and subjected to extreme temperatures. Paper labels can crack or wrinkle during such processes. The cracking or wrinkling of a label is especially detrimental to the use of bar codes on such labels. Unless a smooth uninterrupted surface is provided, the bar codes may be unreadable by a bar code reader. This forces manual entering of data into a computer thus increasing the chance for errors.

There are a number of other requirements that a blood pack label must meet. Some such requirements are set forth in the labeling requirements that have been instituted by the: American Blood Commission's Uniform Labeling Guidelines 1985; or NBTS "Spec for Uniform Labeling of Blood and Blood Products."

It is also desirable that blood pack labels be easily applied to the blood pack. Such labels must also endure the typical manufacturing processing conditions that are typically utilized. In this regard, the bag and label must be sterilizable. Further, the labels must be able to withstand the processing conditions that the containers may be subjected to by the customer, for example, cen-

trifugation, liquid freezing, water bath thawing to name a few.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a label for a blood pack that provides the desirable characteristics of a paper label but not the disadvantages. The labels of the present invention have a permeability with respect to gas that is similar to paper. Additionally, the label will accept printing as easily as paper. However, the label is more durable than a paper label in that it can tolerate moisture, abrasion, temperature extremes, dimensional changes, and the like. Accordingly, the labels do not crack or wrinkle as easily as paper labels.

The present invention provides a label for a blood pack comprising a microporous plastic film including a matrix of interconnected pores for allowing gas to flow into and out of the blood pack through a labeled area. The pores allow ink to be absorbed at least on an outer surface of the label allowing the label to be printed and/or written on.

In an embodiment, the label includes either a pressure or heat sensitive adhesive on a bottom surface thereof for allowing the label to be secured to the blood pack.

In an embodiment, the label includes one or more bar codes printed thereon.

The present invention also provides a blood pack that includes a label that is constructed from a microporous plastic film including a matrix of interconnected pores for allowing gas to flow into and out of the blood pack through a labeled area. At least the pores located on an outer surface of the label are so constructed and arranged to receive ink allowing the label to be written on.

In an embodiment, the label is secured to the blood pack by a pressure or heat sensitive adhesive.

The present invention also provides a method for labeling a blood pack comprising the steps of: applying a label comprising microporous plastic film to the blood pack; allowing gas to flow through pores in the label into and out of the blood bag; and writing on the label by causing ink to be received within pores located on an outer surface of the label.

An advantage of the present invention is that the microporous surface of the label also allows other labels to be applied to the original bag labels such that their adhesives utilize the porous surface of the first label to form permanent bonds.

Another advantage of plastic labels of the present invention is that the label does not contain some of the typical undesirable chemical constituents of paper, such as formaldehyde.

Additional features and advantages of the present invention are described in, and will be apparent from, the detailed description of the presently preferred embodiments and from the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates a blood pack including the label of the present invention.

FIG. 2a is a photomicrograph of a surface magnification (3,000 times) of the labeling surface of a current prior art paper label.

FIG. 2b is a photomicrograph of a surface magnification (3,000 times) of the labeling surface of an embodiment of a label of the present invention.

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BAG AND LABEL MATERIAL GAS PERMEABILITY								
UNITS = (CC/100 IN ² /24 HOURS)*								
	Container #1 Plasticized PVC		Container #2 Plasticized PVC		Container #3 Polyolefin		Container #4 Plasticized PVC	
	O ₂ *	CO ₂ *	O ₂ *	CO ₂ *	O ₂ *	CO ₂ *	O ₂ *	CO ₂ *
<u>Paper Labels</u>								
1	23	132	18	186	—	—	34	537
2	—	—	—	—	91	426	—	—
3	—	—	—	—	123	616	—	—
<u>Microporous Labels</u>								
4	27	220	54	703	—	—	56	506
5	24	204	59	285	222	667	52	383
6	26	209	49	285	101	682	72	660
7	27	185	56	318	114	765	60	572

Tested per ASTM #03985 for O₂
Through Label Material and Bag Material Combined
(Modified for CO₂ by Using Infrared Detector)

1. Paper Label available from DRG, Madison, Wis. under the designation Newton Falls paper with heat activated adhesive. 2. Paper label available from Modern Press, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., under the designation Champion Kromekote paper with pressure sensitive adhesive. 3. Paper label available from Modern Press, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., under the designation Champion Kromekote paper with pressure sensitive adhesive. 4. Microporous Film Label from 3M with pressure sensitive adhesive. 5. Microporous Film Label from 3M with pressure sensitive adhesive. 6. Microporous Film Label from Avery Label, Azusa, Calif. with pressure sensitive adhesive. 7. Microporous Film Label from Avery Label, Azusa, Calif. with pressure sensitive adhesive.

Referring now to FIGS. 2-5, electron microscopy photographs at different magnifications for currently used paper labels and labels of the present invention are illustrated. The label of the present invention illustrated in the photos (FIGS. 2b, 4a, 4b, and 5) are made with Teslin from PPG Industries. The microphotographs are consistent with the test results set forth above demonstrating porosity at least as good as the porosity of paper labels.

It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those skilled in the

art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention and without diminishing its attendant advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A blood pack including a label wherein the label including a substrate having a top surface capable of receiving ink and a bottom surface providing means for securing the label to a blood pack, the substrate being constructed from a microporous plastic film including a matrix of interconnected pores for allowing gas to flow into and out of the blood pack through the label, at least pores located on an outer surface of the label being so constructed and arranged to receive ink allowing the label to be written on, the blood pack being defined by plastic sheets that are sealed along edges thereof to define an interior for receiving and storing blood.

2. The blood pack of claim 1 wherein the label is secured to the blood pack by a pressure sensitive material.

3. The blood pack of claim 1 wherein the label is heat sealed to the blood pack.

4. The blood pack of claim 1 wherein the label includes a bar code printed thereon.

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